

Ohio Field Buildings

Herrick Archives Number H 239

1. General Note

This report covers all structures at Ohio Field, which served for intercollegiate sports from 1898 until replaced by the Stadium (Building 082). The athletic fields were moved here in 1898 from the west side of Neil Avenue, approximately between the present Hamilton Hall (038) and Botany and Zoology Building (014).

2. Name

The name "Ohio Field" was conferred at the dedication at the Oberlin-Ohio State football game on November 21, 1908 (L November 25, 1908). However, there was no official Board of Trustees action designating the name.

Prior to the dedication, the following names had been used: University Field, "U" Field, Athletic Park, and Athletic Field.

3. Location

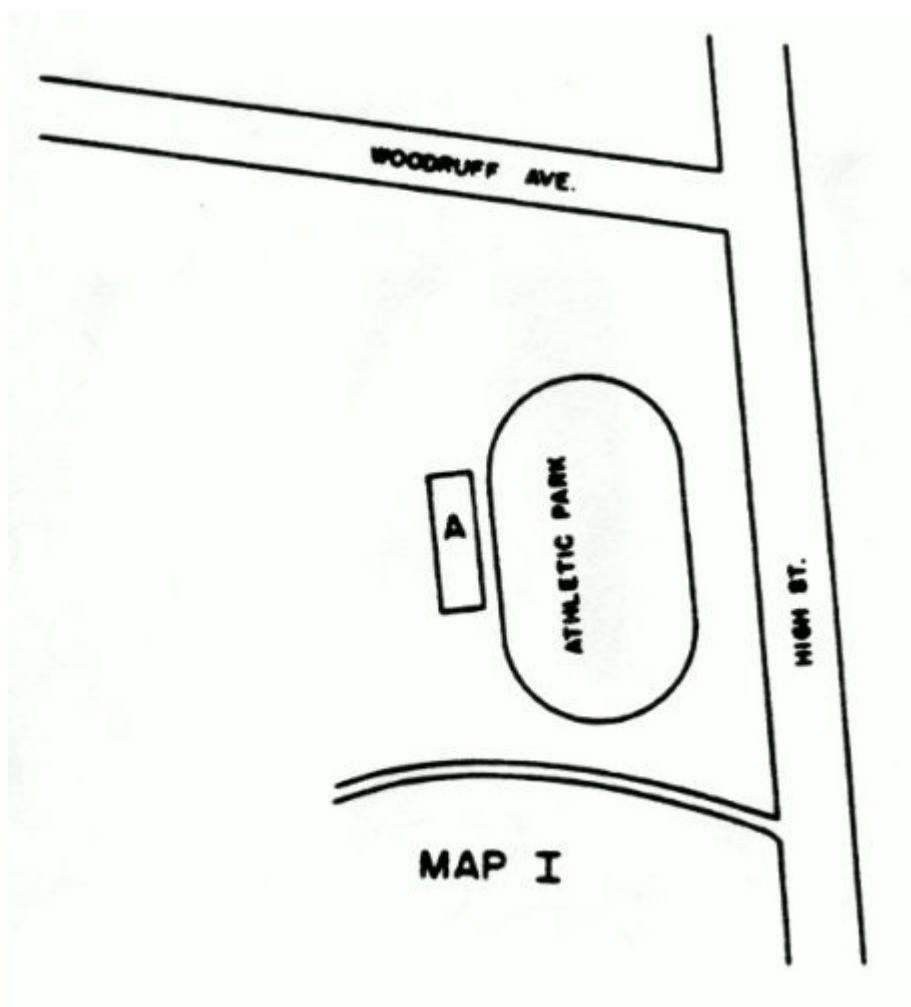
3.1 The general location was the block bounded by the present High Street, West Woodruff Avenue, College Road, and West Seventeenth Avenue. See the three maps below.

3.2 Since the principal entrance was from the south, these buildings are arbitrarily indexed at 30 West Seventeenth Avenue.

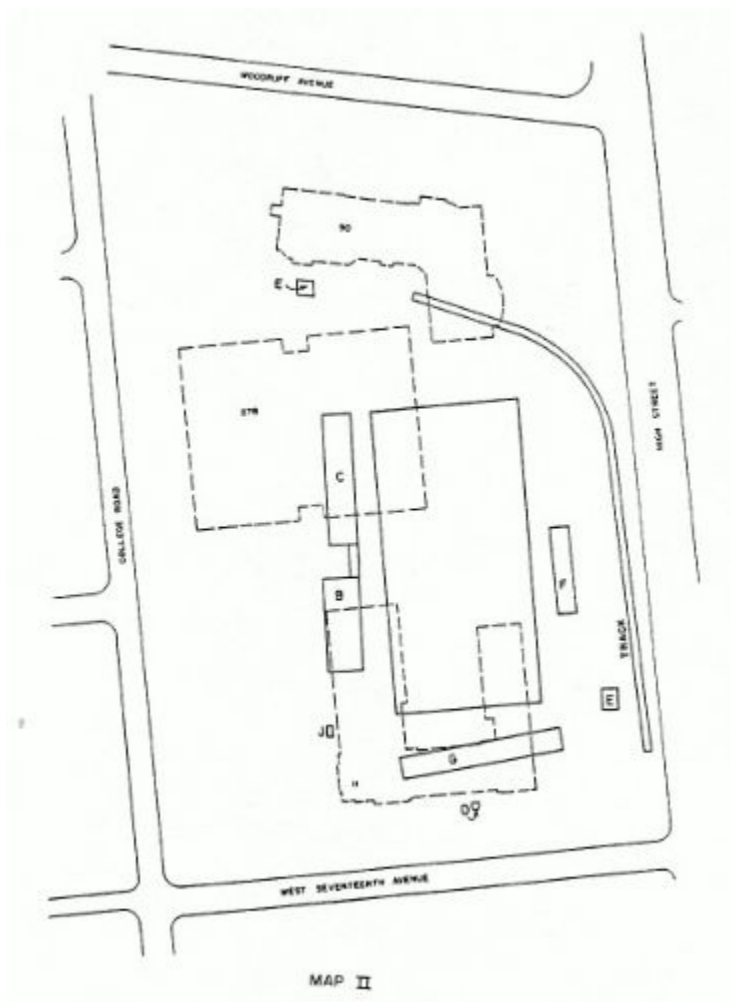
4. Maps

Three maps are included below. On each map, each athletic structure has been designated by a letter, which is used on all maps on which that structure appears.

Map I — This is based on Map 190-01, which was reconstructed from memory by Professor Bradford to depict the campus in 1900. It cannot be regarded as highly accurate as to details.

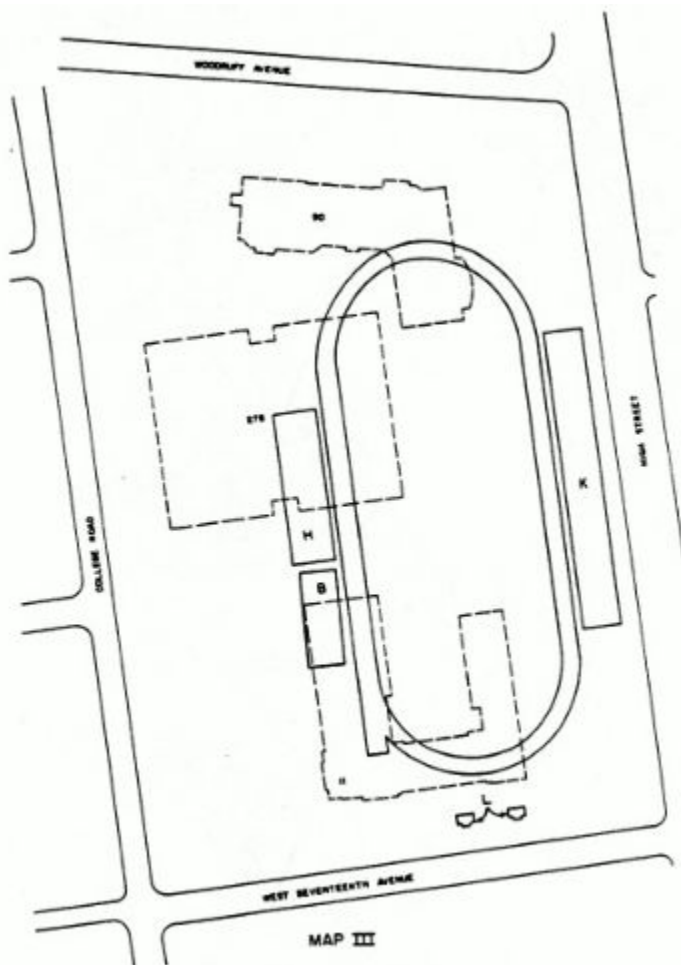


Map II— This is a 1906 map (790-09), which was prepared by a surveyor, and presumably is accurate. The map has been modified to show present buildings and present surrounding streets.



For Identification of buildings shown by broken lines, see Appendix A.

Map III — This is Map 191-14, which was prepared and kept up to date by the University Architect from 1912 until the middle or late 1920's. Again, present buildings and surrounding streets have been added.



For identification of buildings shown by broken lines, see Appendix A.

5. The Individual Structures

5.1 Since information regarding these structures is usually fragmentary, the usual details cannot be included. Instead, the following paragraphs summarize the information that has been found for each structure.

5.2 Structure A — Original Bleachers

These were wooden bleachers brought from the Neil Avenue field and re-erected at the new location in 1898. The Lantern on May 18, 1898 stated that volunteer students had worked all day on May 14, 1898 moving the fence, and expressed the hope that the bleachers would be in place for the Ohio Wesleyan baseball game on May 20. It is not known whether this hope was realized, but the bleachers were in the new location by fall (L October 5, 1898). Presumably, they were moved by students, but this is not certain.

Map I shows the location, as recalled later by Professor Bradford. The exact location has not been established.

These bleachers had a capacity of 500 (L December 6, 1899). No photograph of these bleachers has been found.

The date of demolition of these bleachers has not been established, but it had to be no later than

the summer of 1901, when new bleachers (C) were erected on the west side of the field, and probably in 1900, when the grandstand (B) was erected.

These bleachers were occasionally referred to as the "grandstand" before Structure B was erected.

5.3 Structure B — Grandstand

At the Board of Trustees meeting on June 12, 1900, President Thompson presented a form of contract for construction of a grandstand. The project was to be financed by a loan from Dean George B. Kaufman (Pharmacy), the loan to be repaid from athletic ticket sales. The plans were approved, and the Lantern on October 16, 1900 reported that the grandstand was completed.

The grandstand was covered by a roof, and included ground-level boxes at the front. The capacity was 700 (Pollard, James E., Ohio State Athletics 1879-1959. Columbus: Athletic Department, Ohio State University, 1959. p. 79)

At the time of constructing the west bleachers (C), ten boxes were constructed in front of the grandstand and the roof was extended to cover them. (L September 20, 1901) The boxes had a capacity of 200 (L September 25, 1901).

The grandstand is shown in many photographs, of which X 1988 is typical.

The Monthly in March 1924 (15:29) reported that the "west bleachers," the last vestige of Ohio Field, had been torn down. It is not known whether this refers to Structures B and H, or only to H. If the latter, Structure B came down at a undetermined earlier date.

5.4 Structure C — West Bleachers

At its meeting on June 17, 1901 the Board of Trustees appropriated \$1,000 for improvement of the athletic grounds. With this money, new bleachers were erected on the west side of the field and north of the grandstand (B). The work was done by W.I. Carrothers during the summer, and on September 24, 1901, the Board of Trustees approved payment of his bill. At the time of presenting the bill (September 24), President Thompson reported that the capacity of the bleachers was 1,500.

The Lantern on September 20, 1901 reported that the bleachers were over 100 feet long. Map II shows a connection between Structures B and C, which has not been identified. Typical photographs of these west bleachers are X 1984, X 1988 and X 1989. These bleachers were replaced in 1910 by new bleachers (Structure H).

5.5 Structure D — Treasurer's Office

This structure is mentioned in the Lantern on December 16, 1901 without details. Possibly it was constructed along with the west bleachers (C) and the grandstand addition (B). This structure is called "Ticket Office" on Map II. No further details are known. It is possible that this structure was not replaced until the two ticket offices (L) were constructed in 1909.

This structure can be seen in Photograph X 13463.

5.6 Structure E — Team Shelters

The lantern on October 16, 1901 stated "players quarters" were situated in the northeast corner of the field; on December 11, 1901 that the field quarters for one team were in the northeast corner, and for the other in the northwest corner. These apparently were erected during the summer of 1901. They were merely covered shelters where players could be out of the cold between halves.

Map II shows unidentified structures at the northwest and southeast (not northeast) corners of the field. It is possible that these were the team shelters. No photographs of these shelters have been found.

The date of demolition of these shelters has not been determined, but the Lantern on September 21, 1910 reported that new team shelter rooms had been built under the east bleachers (K).

5.7 Structure F — Temporary East Bleachers

The Lantern on December 11, 1901 reported that temporary bleachers were erected on the east side of the field, and were removed at the end of the season. It is probable that they were re-erected from time to time until permanent bleachers (Structure K) were erected. See Map II, which shows bleachers on the east side of the field.

These temporary bleachers are shown in Photograph X 1991.

5.8 Structure G — Standing Platform

The only information found with respect to this structure is that it is shown on Map II (1906). No photograph has been found.

5.9 Structure H — West Bleachers

The Lantern on September 21, 1910 reported that the new bleachers on the west side would be ready in two weeks. These replaced Structure C, were larger, and were set at a slightly different angle. Compare Maps II and III in this regard.

The new bleachers were 160' x 50' and had a capacity of 2,000 (L September 13, 1910).

A press box was added to these bleachers. This first appears in Photograph X 8530 (1920). It does not appear in two 1917 photographs (X 8513 and X 8514).

5.10 Structure J — Unidentified

This appears only on Map II and is not identified. No photograph has been found.

See Addendum No.2

5.11 Structure K — New East Bleachers

In 1907, the Olmsted Brothers developed a general plan for improvements at Ohio Field (Map 190-18).

The Lantern on December 11, 1907 reported that bids were taken on that date for Structure K and for repair of the grandstand and west bleachers.

Structure K was 330 feet long, and had 20 tiers of seats with a total capacity of 4,200 people. It was constructed by J.D. Brush (McC 2:145). It was designed by Professor Clyde T. Morris (L September 30, 1908).

Typical pictures of Structure K are X 1771 and X 8851.

The "east stands" were sold for \$1,000 in 1922 and moved to Edwards Field at Ohio Wesleyan University (M 14:6 — October 1922). The Lantern on October 2, 1922 reported that this sale had been negotiated in September, and by October 2 only the framework remained at Ohio Field.

5.12 Structure L — South Ticket Offices

The two ticket offices shown at the south end of the field on Map III were erected during the summer of 1909 (L September 21, 1909).

Typical photographs are X 1768 and X 1982.

The date of demolition has not been determined, but presumably they were gone by March 1924 when the Monthly (15:29) reported that the removal of the west bleachers erased the "last vestige" of Ohio Field.

John H. Herrick
April 20, 1979